

CLAIMS

1. A cooking utensil for creating an elongated cavity in a bread item configured to receive a meat item therein, said cooking utensil comprising:
 - a bread-impaling spike supported by and extending from a base member and configured to impale a bread item, said bread-impaling spike comprising:
 - an elongated body portion having an equilateral surface configuration configured to form a defined cavity within said bread item, as well as at least one condiment receiving channel therein, said condiment receiving channel located at an intersection of cavity surfaces and defined by a divergence of said cavity surfaces from said meat item, said condiment receiving channel configured to receive a condiment therein; and
 - a piercing end portion formed with said elongated body portion for initially piercing said bread item.
 2. The cooking utensil of claim 1, further comprising a heat source configured to supply heat to said bread-impaling spike for the purpose of toasting at least one interior wall of said bread-item defining said cavity.
 3. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said bread-impaling spike, and particularly said elongated body portion, comprises a plurality of planar surfaces formed together about and around a longitudinal axis to create a closed-form cross-sectional geometric shape.
 4. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said elongated body portion comprises a cross-sectional geometric shape selected from the group consisting of a triangle, a square, a pentagon, a hexagon, and an octagon.
 5. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said elongated body portion comprises a cross-sectional geometric shape consisting of curved segments.

6. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said elongated body portion comprises a uniform cross-section.

7. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said elongated body portion comprises a
5 non-uniform cross-section consisting of a bottom portion having a wider cross-section than an upper portion, thus allowing said bottom portion to form a larger cavity than that formed by said upper portion.

8. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said bread-impaling spike further
10 comprises a heating element disposed within at least a portion of said elongated body portion, said heating element providing heat to and heating said impaling spike, thus allowing said bread-impaling spike to function as a stand-alone unit.

9. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said condiment receiving channel extends
15 along at least a portion of the length of said cavity.

10. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said bread-impaling spike forms at least two condiment receiving channels comprising separate and distinct volumes of space.

20 11. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said bread-impaling spike is formed of a heat conducting material.

12. The cooking utensil of claim 1, wherein said piercing end portion tapers from said elongated body portion to form a point.

25 13. A cooking utensil configured to form a central cavity in a surrounding bread item to receive an elongated meat item in the cavity, the cooking utensil comprising:

a bread-impaling spike supported by and extending from a base member
configured to form a cavity within a bread item, said bread-impaling spike
30 comprising:

an elongated body portion comprising an external surface shaped to define at least two lengths comprising a diagonal length and a side lateral length, each of said lengths extending through a longitudinal axis of said elongated body portion, said diagonal length extending between opposing corners of a cross-section of said elongated body portion, and said lateral length extending between opposing sides of said cross-section and orthogonal to said longitudinal axis, said lengths defining the dimensions of said bread-impaling spike, which is operable to form said condiment receiving channel extending a substantial distance along a longitudinal length in said cavity; and

10 a piercing end portion formed with said elongated body portion for initially piercing said bread item.

15 14. A cooking utensil configured to form a central cavity in a surrounding bread item to receive an elongated meat item in the cavity, the cooking utensil comprising:

20 a bread-impaling spike configured to form a cavity within a bread item, said bread-impaling spike comprising:

25 an elongated body portion of non-uniform cross-section having an external surface shaped to define at least two different widths extending laterally with respect to a longitudinal axis of said elongated body portion, each of the at least two different widths being defined between opposing sides of said external surface through the longitudinal axis and operable to form a condiment receiving channel extending a substantial distance along a longitudinal length in the cavity of the bread item to facilitate filling said cavity with said elongated meat item and condiments in said condiment receiving channel; and

30 a piercing end portion formed with said elongated body portion and configured to initially pierce said bread item.

15. The cooking utensil of claim 14, wherein said cross-sectional geometric shape is selected from the group consisting of a triangle, a square, a rectangle, a pentagon, a hexagon, and an octagon.

5 16. The cooking utensil of claim 14, wherein said cross-sectional geometric shape comprises at least one curved segment.

17. The cooking utensil of claim 14, wherein said condiment receiving channel comprises a single volume of space annularly surrounding said meat item.

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18. A bread item comprising:
an elongate body;
a cavity formed within said elongate body from a bread-impaling device, said cavity comprising at least one cavity surface and a length that extends along at least a portion of a longitudinal axis of said bread item; and
15 at least one condiment receiving channel disposed within and extending along at least a portion of the length of said cavity, said condiment receiving channel defined by a divergence of a cavity surface away from an inserted meat item, thus creating a defined volume of space configured for receiving condiments therein.
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19. A cooking utensil comprising:
a base member;
at least one bread-impaling spike coupled to and extending from said base
25 member, said impaling spike comprising an elongated body portion and a piercing end portion for forming a cavity within a bread item, said elongated body portion comprises a plurality of planar surfaces formed together about and around a longitudinal axis to create a closed-form cross-sectional geometric shape configured to form at least one condiment receiving channel within said cavity of said bread item upon inserting a meat item;

an impaling system comprising:

a bread basket displaceable with respect to said bread-impaling spike and configured to receive and support said bread item therein; and
a guide system operable with said bread basket for aligning said bread
5 basket and said contained bread item with said bread-impaling spike during displacement and for guiding said bread basket and said bread item onto said bread-impaling spike.

20. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said base member is operably connected
10 to a heat source that conducts heat to said bread-impaling item for toasting at least one interior wall of said bread item defining said cavity.

21. The cooking utensil of claim 19, further comprising a heat shield surrounding said bread-impaling spike.

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22. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said impaling system comprises:
a bread basket comprising:
an open-end squeeze member comprising a planar member having first
and second opposing ends formed into a cylinder so that said ends
20 are facing each other and are separated an identified distance;
a handle attached to each of said ends of said squeeze member for
facilitating the squeezing of said bread item;
at least one guide receiver coupled to said squeeze member; and
a guide system comprising at least one elongate guide coupled to said base
25 member, said guide receiver receives said elongate guide, thus properly
aligning said bread basket and said bread item with said bread-impaling spike to facilitate the impaling of said bread item.

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23. The cooking utensil of claim 22, wherein said bread basket further comprises a support portion formed over an upper end of said squeeze member for preventing upward movement of said bread item as it is impaled by said bread-impaling spike.

24. The cooking utensil of claim 22, wherein said squeeze member comprises a configuration selected from the group consisting of mesh or solid.

5 25. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said impaling system comprises:
an open-end bread basket comprising:
first and second round portions hinged together to create a squeeze shield;
front and rear guide portions extending from respective ends of said first
and second round portions;
10 handle portions extending from said front ends of said first and second
round portions;
a guide system comprising:
first and second guide pins extending from and positioned on a side of said
base member and spaced apart an identified distance; and
15 third and fourth guide pins extending from said base member and
positioned on a side opposite that of said first and second guide
pins, said third and fourth guide pins also spaced apart an
identified distance so as to be symmetric with said first and second
guide pins, said first and second guide pins configured to receive
20 said rear guide portions there between and said third and fourth
guide pins configured to receive said front guide pins there
between once said squeeze shield is in a closed position.

26. The cooking utensil of claim 25, further comprising a heat shield comprising a
25 first portion coupled between said first and third guide pins and a second portion coupled
between said second and fourth guide pins, said heat shield annularly surrounding said
base member and encircling said bread-impaling spike.

30 27. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said impaling system comprises:
an open-ended bread basket comprising:

first and second curved plate portions pivotally coupled together by a hinged mechanism;

a crossing biased handle assembly configured to bias said first and second plates into an open position;

5 at least one guide bar extending down at least a portion of either of said first and second plate portions;

a guide system comprising:

an open-ended thin wall cylinder configured for receiving said bread basket therein upon said bread basket receiving said bread item and

10 being closed and for guiding said bread basket over said bread-impaling spike; and

a wall extension extending from at least a portion of a rim of said cylinder, said wall extension functioning to guide said bread basket into an interior of said cylinder.

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28. The cooking utensil of claim 27, wherein said guide system functions as a heat shield to protect the user from said bread-impaling spike.

29. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said impaling system comprises:

20 an open-end bread basket comprising:

a first plate;

a second plate pivotally coupled to said first plate, such that said first and second plates form a bread basket enclosure when in a closed position;

25 a plurality of protrusions extending from an interior surface of said first and second plates for providing increased grip on said bread item once retained therein;

a handle portion coupled to each of said first and second plates;

a guide system comprising:

30 a support rail juxtaposed to said bread-impaling spike and comprising a thin-walled cylinder that extends upward from said base member a

pre-determined distance, said support rail comprising a through slot formed along at least a portion of a length of said support rail; a sleeve slidably disposed within said support rail and stopped by a stopper positioned at an upper end of said support rail;

5 a biasing member disposed within said support rail for biasing said sleeve in an upward manner against said stopper; and

at least one connector rod extending from said sleeve at one end and coupling to said first plate of said bread basket at an opposite end, thus properly aligning and supporting said bread basket in an elevated and biased position above said bread-impaling spike, said bread basket being configured to travel in a bi-directional manner about said bread-impaling spike as said sleeve travels bi-directionally within said support rail, and wherein said rod travels within said slot to facilitate the displacement of said bread basket

10 and to prohibit it from rotating.

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30. The cooking utensil of claim 29, wherein said biasing member comprises a spring.

31. The cooking utensil of claim 29, wherein said sleeve is comprised of thermoplastic material capable of withstanding heat generated within said guide rail.

20 32. The cooking utensil of claim 29, wherein said first and second plates are curved to match the curvature of a bread item.

25 33. The cooking utensil of claim 29, further comprising handles coupled to each of said first and second plates for facilitating the opening and closing of said bread basket and the impaling of said bread item.

30 34. The cooking utensil of claim 29, further comprising latching means for releasably latching said first plate to said second plate.

35. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said base member and said bread-impaling spike are operably coupled to a concave base mount configured for placement over a stove that functions as a heating source to heat said bread-impaling spike.

5 36. The cooking utensil of claim 19, further comprising a guide system operable with said bread basket for facilitating the impaling of said bread item, said guide system functioning to align said bread basket and said contained bread item with said bread-impaling spike and to guide said bread basket and said contained bread item while impaling said bread item.

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37. The cooking utensil of claim 19, wherein said bread basket comprises a plurality of protrusions on an inner surface to increase the grip on said bread item.

15 38. The cooking utensil of claim 19, further comprising a removably heat shield surrounding said bread-impaling spike for protecting the user while impaling said bread item.

39. A cooking utensil comprising:

a base mount configured for placement over a stove element;

20 a bread-impaling spike coupled to and extending from said base mount, said impaling spike comprising an elongated body portion and a piercing end for forming a cavity within a bread item, said elongated body portion comprises a plurality of planar surfaces formed together about and around a longitudinal axis to create a closed-form cross-sectional geometric shape configured to form at least two condiment receiving channels within said cavity of said bread item upon inserting a meat item;

25 a bread basket for receiving and retaining said bread item comprising:
first and second curved plate portions pivotally coupled together by a hinged mechanism;
a crossing biased handle assembly configured to bias said first and second plates into an open position;

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a guide system for receiving and aligning said bread basket and said contained
bread item with said bread-impaling spike, said guide system comprising:
an open-end thin wall cylinder configured for receiving said bread basket
therein upon said bread basket receiving said bread item and being
closed and for guiding said bread basket over said bread-impaling
spike; and

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a wall extension extending from at least a portion of a rim of said cylinder,
said wall extension functioning to guide said bread basket into an
interior of said cylinder.

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40. The cooking utensil of claim 39, wherein said bread-impaling spike further
comprises a rod extending therefrom and through a surface of said concave base mount,
said rod configured to be in communication with said stove element, thus functioning as a
heat sink to heat said spike.

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41. The cooking utensil of claim 39, wherein said bread basket further comprises at
least one guide bar extending down at least a portion of the length of said bread basket to
facilitate proper orientation and alignment of said bread basket within said cylinder.

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42. The cooking utensil of claim 39, wherein said base member comprises a concave
configuration.

43. A method for applying condiments to a bread item comprising:
providing a bread item;

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forcing said bread item over a bread-impaling spike to create a cavity therein for
receiving a meat item, said bread-impaling spike also configured to form
at least one condiment receiving channel having a volume of space
adjacent said cavity and said meat item, said condiment receiving channel
defined by at least one wall of said cavity and a surface of said inserted
meat item, said condiment receiving channel extending along at least a
portion of the length of said cavity for receiving a condiment therein;

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inserting a meat item into said cavity; and
applying a condiment within said condiment receiving channel.

44. The method of claim 43, further comprising inserting said bread item into an
5 impaling system prior to impaling said bread item, said impaling system configured to
facilitate said step of forcing said bread item over said bread-impaling spike.

45. The method of claim 43, wherein said applying a condiment is subsequent to said
step of inserting said meat item.

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46. The method of claim 43, wherein said applying a condiment is prior to said step
of inserting said meat item.

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